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Green calls for cleanup of San Jacinto Waste Pits - Your Houston News: News

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PRESS RELEASE

On June 10, 2014, Congressman Gene Green sent a letter to Chair of the EPA National Remedy Review Board (NRRB) Amy Legare, urging her to completely remove dioxin waste from the affected areas in the San Jacinto River. This has been an ongoing effort for Congressman Green and the Harris County Attorney's Office.

“These waste pits continue to be a public health threat, particularly for communities in Harris County and along the River. Residents have been advised not to drink water or eat seafood that may have come from the area because dioxin can do serious damage to a person's immune system, and can also cause cancer and reproductive and developmental problems,” Green said. “This is no way to live. We need to take the strongest measure available to clean up the site.”

Currently, the San Jacinto Waste Pits are partially submerged, and contained under a temporary cap near the western bank of the San Jacinto River, immediately north of the I-10 bridge. The pits were created in the mid-60s by Champion Paper and McGinnes Industrial Maintenance, who filled the ponds with waste paper sludge from a local paper mill until 1968, when they were abandoned.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has proposed six possible cleanup solutions ranging from no further action to full removal of the pits and chemical cleanup. Congressman Gene Green's letter to the NRRB calls for the strongest mediation proposal, which would permanently remove the dioxin waste from the site and protect local communities from the potential and actual threat that the waste pits pose.



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